

Meeting Minutes
COMMUNICATIONS ACCESS COUNCIL
December 6, 2008
Vocational Rehabilitation Blvd, Las Vegas, NV

ROLL CALL:

Members:, Jana Vickers, Dennis Granata, Linda Raymond, Angela Greer, Theresa Piccinini, Kim Ryan, Kimberlee Holloway, & Kim Holloway **Absent:** Cindy Frank, Denise Phipps & Karen Pearl

Staff: Betty Hammond

Interpreters: Carolyn Preston-Bass, and Jasmine Marine.

CART: Lori Judd

Guests: Evelyn Preston, Sammy Millburn, Elaine Hanes, Joanne Williams, Norma Leah Chrismon, Annette Loader, Ann Marie Savino, Fred Kline, Gary Shade, Tim Carter, Pam Ortman, Dottie Cartright (Sprint), Mike Baer (Sprint), Mark Finn, Jeff Beardsley.

INTRODUCTIONS:

Jana Vickers, Chair, called the meeting to order at 11:05 am. Introductions were made by all present. Acting Chair discussed housekeeping information.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

A motion to approve the minutes of the January meeting was offered by Linda Raymond, seconded by Theresa Piccinini and unanimously approved.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:

Chair Vickers asked for feedback regarding future agenda items. She also asked the council to let her or Ms. Hammond know if, before the next meeting they thought of a particular item they would like to see on the agenda. The following suggestion was made regarding the agenda: Discuss objectives of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Advocacy Resource Center (DHHARC) with particular attention to the varying needs of the Northern, Southern and rural areas of the state.

OFFICE OF DISABILITY SERVICES STAFF REPORT:

Ms. Hammond informed the Council regarding a time frame for the next RFP (Request for Proposals) for Equipment Distribution and Advocacy services. She shared information regarding cuts to programs and informed the Council that the Office felt it would be in the best interest of the program to wait until fiscal year 2010 to go to RFP for the services; and that would be if the economic climate was right at that time.

The group decided to postpone two items on the agenda regarding the Council's role regarding the new Interpreter/CART regulations; and any changes that may make to the council's bylaws. In addition, the group agreed to discuss guidelines for Council members who may have a conflict of interest in their role as Council members who may have a role in the regulations. The group agreed that having Karen Pearl and Cindy Frank both available for the discussion was important to the group. Linda Raymond made a motion to hold the topics for the next agenda. Seconded by Angela Greer. Motion Passed.

RELAY SERVICE PROVIDER'S REPORT:

Mr. Michael Baer reported Relay traffic information to the Council. Mr. Baer introduced Dottie Cartwright and explained her role as a sales representative for the Western Region and her role in the RFP process. He also introduced Mark Finn as a new contractor for Sprint working specifically with Hard of Hearing populations and the CapTel program.

Mr. Baer spoke about traffic trends for (Traditional Relay Service) TRS, and CapTel, explaining that over the last seven years or so, TRS has decreased in traffic by about 20% each year as other, new technologies increase. CapTel has steadily increased as has the use of the Video Phone which is not sponsored by the state, but rather by the Federal Government. He informed the group that with the growth of CapTel, a new answering call center has been opened. He stated that Sprint has a contract with Ultra Tech to provide CapTel service.

He also emphasized that people are tending to use wireless devices more and more; and this seems to be the trend for future use of the Relay system. He explained the new ten digit numbering system mandates by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) and how this may impact Relay Nevada and relay in general.

Mr. Baer spoke about outreach efforts to specialized markets within TRS such as Voice Carry Over. In addition, Mr. Baer stated that Sprint is in the process of updating the Relay Nevada Website. He stated he will bring an updated spreadsheet showing costs and outreach to next meeting. The public and group discussed issues with hearing customers not wanting to use the Relay system or related 800 numbers to call CapTel or other types of Relay users.

Mr. Baer thought that Relay Nevada should update its brochure. Mr. Baer made a suggestion that he will update the brochure after he finished updating the 711 Relay website.

He also spoke briefly about a pilot project with Hawaii's relay program to provide Emergency notification. The Council also agreed that a discussion regarding Emergency Notification methods for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing needed to be discussed, with Sprint offering information regarding their involvement in other state programs for Emergency Notification.

EQUIPMENT DISTRIBUTION PROGRAM AND ADVOCACY REPORTS:

Ms. Theresa Piccinini reported on activities of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Advocacy Center (DHHARC). She informed the Council that in the first quarter, DHHARC statewide served 161 clients for advocacy and information referral services. She reported that the agency continues to build relationships with other service agencies such as Vocational Rehabilitation and the Correctional facilities. Training for the Lovelock Correctional staff will be conducted in January, 2009.

She reported that the agency held several workshops in Sparks and in Las Vegas on topics such as Hepatitis, and classes for learning ASL in Reno, Las Vegas and Elko. She said the agency held its annual Communication Arts Camp and that 20 Deaf and Hard of Hearing youth attending; and conducted annual "Camp Sign Shine" with 58 youth attending from Nevada and California.

Ms. Piccinini reported the following on the numbers for the Distribution Program: 12 TTY's were distributed, with several being loaned to agencies serving Relay users, 35 CapTel phones and 62 amplified phones. 156 individuals received training on how to use equipment or the relay service. She felt that the program should get into distributing wireless systems as the Deaf population is depending less and less on the TTY.

INTERPRETER/CAPTIONING SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT:

Ms. Kim Holloway gave the Council an updated on the activities of the subcommittee. She stated that the subcommittee has been working on developing requirements for waivers for those needing them in the registration process. Ms. Hammond added that the Office is still receiving applications, but that a list of providers should soon be available for people to use as a reference. The website is www.dhhs.nv.gov . This is a large website so if users scroll down and click on the right where they will see a hand icon, this will take them to the regulations page and information.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Linda Raymond expressed a concern that the Executive Director of DHHARC has made several trips to the Las Vegas area, and felt that the center should use the Video Phone or other methods to communicate. She also asked about the current status of DHHARC and NVAD splitting into two entities. Jana Vickers explained that the Executive Director had to fly down as part of her duties, and was interviewing for a supervisory position. That position is now filled so that less direct supervision from the Executive Director will be needed. She explained that the travel in the current budget is already approved and being used as planned, but in the next budget it will be cut by approximately 10%. Ms. Vickers explained that a NVAD board meeting took place in November and had an Ad Hoc subcommittee meeting with four members. There was consensus that NVAD and DHHARC should separate and operate separately. Once separated, NVAD will continue to be a membership organization with DHHARC operating as a non-profit business organization. She stated that DHHARC is in the process of setting up the legalities to make this happen.

Ms. Raymond also expressed concern that the DHHARC needs to focus more on the Hard of Hearing and the Deaf Blind. Angela Greer wanted to know more about DHHARC's objectives for service. She also expressed a concern that not enough groups are aware of their services. Kim Ryan added that there is a need for incarcerated Deaf and Hard of Hearing people in Las Vegas to have services from DHHARC.

SCHEDULE NEXT MEETING DATE:

The Council agreed to select the next meeting via email. The meeting hopes to meet around April. The group agreed that the next meeting should take place in Reno.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 1:15 pm.